

# 20 Items to Kick Start Your Food Storage Plan



No matter how many times I write about food, there is always something new to consider or a new and different way to present the same old information in a more useful manner. With that in mind, today I would like to share a method for getting started with your food storage program in an easy, step by step, and cost effective manner.

To be truthful, my initial goal with this article was to respond to readers who were just getting started and wanted a shopping list of things to buy for their food storage pantry. I also wanted to compile a checklist that more experienced preppers could use to compare what they had to what they needed. My goal can pretty much be summed up by saying that I wanted to write about getting started with food storage *the easy way*. No frills, no fluff – just a common sense list of food items to get you started.

With that goal in mind, let me say this: this is not a list of items intended for deep storage. Nor is it a list of items packaged so that they have a 25 year shelf life. (And in reality, do you really need your stored food to last that long?) I am also not going to list items that might be foreign to your palate, difficult to find, or too costly to absorb into your weekly shopping budget.

What you are going to get is a list of 20 items that can easily be purchased at your local grocery store, warehouse club and surprisingly, even online at [Amazon](#). They can be purchased in one shot, all at once, or you can pick up one item from the list each week over a period of twenty weeks. The choice is yours. All I ask is that you consider getting each of the items on the list and that you also consider getting started sooner rather than later. I promise you that this will be easy.

I am going to include quantities that require no extra thought, no calculator and no formula for determining servings or overall quantities. Like I said. This is going to be EASY!

## 20 ITEMS TO KICK START YOUR FOOD STORAGE PLAN

**1. 20 pounds of Rice.** As boring as it may sound, rice is one of the backbones of every

food storage plan. It is filling, nutritious and with the use of varied seasonings and condiments, highly adaptable in a variety of tasty meals. The choice of white, brown or a combination of the two is up to you. White rice has a longer shelf life but brown rice has more nutritional benefits. In my own household, I like to combine the two along with some Jasmine, Basmati and Calrose sticky rice.



**2. 20 pounds of Pinto Beans.** Like rice, beans are the backbone to every food storage plan. You may substitute white, kidney or other types of dried beans but honestly, pintos are one of the least expensive dried beans and in my opinion, one of the tastiest. Need help cooking beans? when you are done here be sure to read [Survival Woman Learns to Cook Dried Beans](#) and you should too and [Respect for the Lowly Pinto Bean](#).

**3. 20 cans of Vegetables.** Green beans, peas, corn and canned tomatoes are good choices. Let your taste and budget guide you. Buy what you currently eat and enjoy.

**4. 20 cans of Fruit.** Peaches, pears, pineapple, fruit cocktail – again, this is your choice. Fruits add a nice sweetness to life and these days we all could use more of that.

**5. 20 cans of Meat.** Chicken, tuna, shrimp, salmon, Vienna sausages, beef stew and yes, even the ubiquitous Spam will satisfy this requirement. Did you know that you can even purchase canned roast beef? Again, let your taste and budget guide you – there is lots to choose from.



**6. 4 pounds Oats.** Remember when you were little and Mom warmed your tummy with a nice comforting bowl of oatmeal? That is what we are talking about here. A bowl of oatmeal topped with canned fruit can be enjoyed for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

**7. 2 large jars of Peanut Butter.** Peanut butter is an excellent source of protein, with plenty of calories for energy and sustenance. Besides, who can resist the taste of a gooey spoonful of luscious peanut butter?

**8. 2 large jars of Tang or other powdered drink mix.** The only requirement here is get

something you like and something fortified with Vitamin C. I am not going to preach and tell you to avoid artificial sweeteners. If Crystal Lite works for you in normal times, go for it.

**9. 5 pounds of Powdered Milk.** Milk is a great source of protein and other nutrients. In addition it is filling and can be used to top your oatmeal cereal or stirred into your coffee as a flavor enhancer.

**10. 5 pounds of Salt.** It goes without saying that salt is an essential for survival plus it has a lot of uses other than as an enhancement for food. That said, our bodies need salt to survive. Read more about salt in the article [Reasons You Need Salt in the Prepper Pantry](#).

**11. 10 pounds of Pancake Mix.** An all in one pancake mix (such as Krusteaz) only requires the addition of water to make up a batch of batter. As with oatmeal, a big plate of pancakes, perhaps with some honey or jam, will make a satisfying meal that can be eaten for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

**12. 2 pounds of Honey and 2 large jars of Jam.** We all need some sweetness in our life, even with Mother Nature or life deals us a blow. I choose honey and jam over sugar but at the end of the day, you can make a substitution or simply mix and match.

**13. 10 pounds of Pasta.** Pasta is familiar and easy to fix. Pasta is a dense form of wheat but so much easier to deal with when you are first starting out. Besides, it is a fabulous comfort food.

**14. 10 cans or jars of Spaghetti Sauce.** Cheap yet satisfying, canned pasta sauce on a bed of pasta creates a satisfying meal that can be put together in minutes.

**15. 20 cans of Soup or Broth.** The beauty of canned soups and canned broth is that they are a budget friendly. Soups are an all-in-one meal solution. All you need is a can opener and a spoon and you have a meal ready to go. For an extra satisfying meal, try using a can of soup as part of the cooking water for your rice. Yummy!

**16. One large jug of Oil.** Choose olive oil, coconut oil or some other cooking oil, but definitely get some. Oil is essential for good health, fueling our energy stores and providing support for fat-soluble vitamins and nutrients as they work their way through our system. Not only that, but a bit of fat in your diet adds flavor and makes you feel

satisfied when you are done eating.

**17. Spices and Condiments.** Adding some spices and condiments to your food storage pantry will allow you to vary the taste of your storage foods, thus mitigating some of the boredom that is likely to occur over time. The exact mix of spices and condiments is up to you but some suggestions include garlic, chili, Tabasco (hot sauce), salsa, oregano, thyme and black pepper.

**18. 5 pounds of Coffee or 100 Tea Bags.** There are those that will say that life without coffee is not life at all. Whole bean (assuming you have a hand grinder), ground or instant – take your choice. Or substitute tea. Green tea and many herbal teas are quite therapeutic so if you like tea, this may be a good way to go.

**19. 2 large bags of Hard Candies.** Hard candy can go a long way toward making an unpleasant situation bearable. Butterscotch drops, peppermints and even lemon drops are good. Have fun with this and pick up a couple of bags of your favorites!

**20. Mini LED Flashlight and Extra Batteries.** Okay, this is a cheater item. It is not food but it is all important and so it will not hurt to stash a miniature flashlight or two along with the edibles in your food storage pantry. My top pick of the moment in the [Block-lite](#). This thing just goes and goes and goes plus, it does not take up any storage space.



**BUT THERE IS NO WHEAT AND NO FLOUR ON THIS LIST!**

So you noticed!

There are no wheat berries or other whole grains (other than oats/oatmeal) on this list and there is also no flour.

While there is a place for these items in a long term storage plan, I consider them part of the second phase of food storage.

The truth is that many preppers would not have a clue as to what to do with wheat, so why push the envelope?

The same goes with flour. To make flour usable, you also need yeast and baking powder plus the skill and know-how to bake. Not only that, you most likely will need an outdoor oven of sorts – especially if the grid is down post disaster. That, and more, will come later, but for now, while covering the basics, it is much simpler and far more prac-

tical to stick with easy to cook foods that can be combined into interesting meals without the need for much experience other than opening a can or a package.

## THE FINAL WORD

As you read through this list, I hope you can visualize the number and variety of meals that can be made by mixing and matching the items listed in the kick-start plan. How about some rice, salsa and canned chicken cooked into a casserole in your [cast iron skillet](#)? Or pancakes topped with canned peaches and honey? Then there are pinto beans, combined with rice and corn and topped with a bit of Tabasco for a fiesta-style meal.

Well okay, perhaps these are not gourmet delights but with the added condiments, they will taste good and be as healthy as you can expect food to be when fresh meats and produce are unavailable.

Is this a complete list of everything you will need to be fully prepared food-wise? Heck no. Are the quantities adequate to feed a family for a month, three months or longer? Perhaps a month but not much longer. Truthfully, for long term storage you need more food and more variety as well as some packaging methods (Mylar bags or [buckets](#) plus oxygen absorbers) to insure that your will food stay viable and pest free for years to come.

But for now we are more focused on either getting started or rounding out our basic survival pantry. And for that, these 20 items will do just fine.

*Enjoy your next adventure through common sense and thoughtful preparation!*

Gaye

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**Bargain Bin:** Here are some of my favorite food storage items. Whether you are just getting started or a seasoned pro, here are the items you will need when purchasing food in bulk for long term, SHTF needs.

**Mylar bags & Oxygen Absorbers:** What I love about Mylar bags and oxygen absorbers is

they protect against every single one of the food storage enemies. Prices do vary but for the most part, they are inexpensive and easy to keep on hand. And while you can seal them up with a [FoodSaver](#), some tubing and a common clothes iron, I find it infinitely easier with a cheap [hair straightening iron](#) that you can pick up \$20 or less.

[60 – 300cc Oxygen Absorbers](#): This is one area where you want to make sure you are getting a quality product. Currently, a pack of 60 (in three 20 unit packs) is about \$10 with free shipping.

[FoodSaver Vacuum Sealer](#): As long as the unit has an accessory port (and this one does), and inexpensive FoodSaver will work just as well as the fancier models. That is my two cents, at least.

[FoodSaver Jar Sealer](#): Already have a FoodSaver? If so, check out this jar sealer which can be used to vacuum seal your Mason jars. This is a great option for short to mid term storage of items such as beans, rice, sugar and salt. Store your jars in a cool, dark place and you are set with the added advantage of removing a small amount for current use without having to disrupt your large Mylar bag or bucket of food.

[Mylar Zip Seal Food Storage Bags](#): These are the zip seal bags that I use to package up my spices, herbs and butter powder. These are extra heavy, 5 mil bags. I found that the zip feature made packaging extra easy although I still seal the bags with my hair iron.

[Sharpie Permanent Markers](#): Sharpies were invented for preppers! And without question, Amazon is the cheapest place to buy them. Typically, the price on Amazon is less than \$8 for a dozen.

[Avery Color Coding Labels](#): These are perfect for labeling your emergency storage foods with the date purchased.



**[Shop the Emergency Essentials Monthly Specials](#)**: The monthly specials at Emergency Essentials feature discounts of up to 35% off sometimes a bit more. They are currently selling their [Freeze Dried Tomatoes](#) for \$25.99, a discount of over 40% off the normal price of \$43.95 for a #10 tin.

Tomatoes are good to have on-hand in your food storage for your favorite recipes. They are easy to store and rehydrate anytime you need them and are

great for adding versatility to your home food supply. I use them in chili, sauces and soups.

Another special this month is the [Freeze-Dried Uncooked Salmon](#) which is an amazing \$20.99 per can which is 58% off the normal price of \$50.95.

In the gear department, the [Katadyn Vario Microfilter Water Filtration System](#) is 26% off at \$69.99. My favorite emergency radio, the [Kaito Voyager](#) is only \$39.99 this month. Don't let the picture fool you – this radio is quite compact and light weight and it works great – even in hand crank mode.

There are a lot more items on sale this month – be sure to take a peek.

### [Shop the Emergency Essentials Monthly Specials](#)

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## FROM THE ALMOST FREE DEPARTMENT

My friends at Survival Life are offering their [Survival Seeds Playing Cards](#) for free. The only hitch is that you must pay \$2.95 in shipping charges.

These cards are pretty cool – with each card showing all of the information you need to know about how to grow, harvest, and prepare 52 nutrient-rich vegetables and herbs from seeds.

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